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President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . . (Portugal)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 49

Report of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the second annual report of the International Tribunal (A/50/365)

The President: May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the second annual report of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991?

It was so decided.

The President: I call on Mr. Antonio Cassese, President of the International Tribunal.

Mr. Cassese (President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991): Since I last had the honour of addressing the General Assembly, in November 1994, there have been numerous positive developments in the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Unhappily, there continue to exist major obstacles in the path of the Tribunal's success — obstacles which are only surmountable if the world community provides assistance.

The International Criminal Tribunal now has the capacity fully to operate as a judicial body. At present we are at last in a position to prosecute those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991.

We have come a long way in the two years since November 1993, when the Tribunal was established. At that time, the Tribunal consisted only of 11 judges and a Statute. It had no budget, no seat, no courtroom, no prison, no staff, no code of criminal procedure. Most debilitating of all, for the first nine months of its existence the Tribunal had no functioning Prosecutor. Since that time we have made great strides. As a result, we can now proudly state that everything is in place at the Tribunal. At long last we are engaged in the administration of justice.

In the two years since November 1993 we have gone from being a lofty — some might have said nebulous — idea to a living reality. The idea was that Member States could unite to ensure that vicious crimes against international humanitarian law would be punished. It was an idea which was met with scepticism, even with ridicule, by many who believed it to be unattainable. But

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it has been attained, at least in part, by dint of patience and perseverance. We Judges felt strongly that it was our moral duty to do our utmost to make the Tribunal an effective judicial mechanism.

I shall briefly recall what I consider to be our major achievements so far: First, our Prosecutor has issued nine indictments against 43 individuals, charging them with serious violations of international humanitarian law. These indictments have all been confirmed by a reviewing Judge. Arrest warrants have been issued against all the accused. These accused include political and military leaders.

Secondly, a number of further investigations are under way in the Office of the Prosecutor with the result that more indictments are being issued almost every month.

Thirdly, in pre-trial hearings, significant issues have been raised and argued before a Trial Chamber and the Appeals Chamber. These issues are of crucial importance; for instance, some concern the international legitimacy and lawfulness of the Tribunal's establishment by the Security Council. Others relate to the Tribunal's subject-matter jurisdiction, that is to say, its power to prosecute certain crimes. Other issues concern the protection of witnesses. The relevant Trial Chamber and the Appeals Chamber have thus had the opportunity to pronounce upon these important matters, thereby breaking new ground in international criminal law.

Fourthly, the trial of an accused is set to start in a few months now that all the pre-trial motions have been heard. The delay in the commencement of the actual trial is due entirely to problems raised by the defence. Counsel for the defence has asked the Tribunal to give him the financial wherewithal necessary to prepare his case, as well as the time necessary to interview witnesses. It is his contention that, so far, he has been unable to contact witnesses for the defence both because they are in a war zone and because of the total — I repeat, total — non-cooperation of the Bosnian Serb authorities in Pale. The Tribunal, of course, considers the rights of the defence and the principle of fair trial as sacrosanct. It therefore felt it was appropriate to grant this delay.

Fifthly, a hearing has been held under rule 61 of the Tribunal's rules of procedure and evidence. Rule 61 provides for a special procedure to which resort may be had when the accused is not brought to trial either because he evades arrest or because the authorities refuse to cooperate with our Tribunal. This special procedure, which is by no means a trial *in absentia*, is designed to avoid giving the accused the power to thwart or obstruct international justice by simply failing to appear in court. Under this procedure witnesses can be called by the Prosecutor, and they may testify in public and have their testimony recorded for posterity. On the basis of their testimony, the Trial Chamber may conclude that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accused has committed the crimes charged in the indictment, and may issue an international arrest warrant.

Last month the Tribunal applied rule 61 for the first time. Thirteen witnesses appeared in court to give testimony regarding the alleged atrocities at the hands of the accused. At the end of the proceedings, the Trial Chamber issued an international arrest warrant against the accused. Further, the Trial Chamber asked me, as the Tribunal's President, to advise the Security Council of the failure of the Bosnian Serb Administration in Pale to cooperate with the Tribunal. I did so on 30 October.

In sum, the Tribunal is boldly travelling towards the accomplishment of its mission. The path is not, however, without certain obstacles. I shall now outline three of them.

First, the decisions, orders and requests of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia can be enforced only by others, namely, national authorities. Unlike domestic criminal courts, the Tribunal has no enforcement agencies at its disposal. Without the intermediary of national authorities, it cannot execute arrest warrants, it cannot seize evidentiary material, it cannot compel witnesses to give testimony, it cannot search the scenes where crimes have been allegedly committed. For all these purposes, it must turn to State authorities and request them to take action. Our Tribunal is like a giant who has no arms and no legs. To walk and work, he needs artificial limbs. These artificial limbs are the State authorities. Without their help the Tribunal cannot operate.

Admittedly, this holds true for all international institutions, which need the support of States to be able to operate. However, our Tribunal needs the support of States more than any other international institution because its actions have a direct impact on individuals who live in the territory of sovereign States and are subject to their jurisdiction. The adoption by States of all the legislative, administrative and judicial measures necessary for the expeditious execution of the Tribunal's decisions is thus of crucial importance.

Unfortunately, despite a clear decision by the Security Council in resolution 827 (1993), at present only some 15 — I repeat: 15 — of the 185 States Members of the United Nations have enacted implementing legislation. A few other States have gone only so far as to indicate their intention to adopt such legislation in the near future.

This lack of cooperation proves particularly paralysing for our Tribunal when it comes to the execution of arrest warrants. As I said, the Tribunal does not have an enforcement agency of any description at its disposal; we therefore need the assistance of States for the execution of arrest warrants issued by the Tribunal. Regrettably, two of the entities of the former Yugoslavia have so far refused to cooperate: I refer to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Bosnian Serb Administration in Pale. Their total lack of cooperation has greatly hampered the work of our Tribunal: 41 of the first 43 accused are in their territory, but they have failed to apprehend these suspects and surrender them to our Tribunal. Without having suspects physically in our presence, we cannot proceed to trial.

A second obstacle facing the Tribunal arises out of the fact that it is trying cases while an armed conflict is still under way and bloodshed and suffering are daily occurrences. This is in stark contrast to the usual situation of judicial institutions dealing with crimes committed in the course of hostilities. They step in only when the conflict has ceased, as at Nuremberg and Tokyo. In contrast to this, our Tribunal has been called upon to dispense justice while armed conflict continues and while the planners and perpetrators of crimes shelter under the protective umbrella of military or political power. Plainly, no suspects will be surrendered to the Tribunal by those authorities which have been criminally complicit in, or at least criminally negligent in not preventing or stopping, serious violations of international humanitarian law.

All of this greatly complicates the task of our Tribunal. For one thing, investigators — whether acting on behalf of the Prosecutor or of the Defence — may be prevented from collecting evidence or interviewing witnesses because of continuing armed clashes. For another, witnesses may, in the absence of a protective State apparatus, fear immediate reprisals against themselves or their relatives, and therefore may be reluctant to come forward to testify. Finally, the state of armed conflict may create in many citizens a mood of partisanship. War criminals may be hailed as heroes, and cooperation with the Tribunal may be viewed as traitorous.

A third concern is the difficulty the Tribunal has faced — and continues to face — in obtaining the financial and practical resources necessary to carry out its work. The budget for the 1994-1995 biennium was approved only in July 1995. Two short months later, the financial crisis in the United Nations created new problems. These kinds of financial limitations strike at the very heart of our Tribunal, for two main reasons.

First, the Tribunal is a new and innovative institution which is in the early stages of its growth, and we are undertaking activities which have never before been carried out by the United Nations. We urgently need to recruit a full complement of staff, we need to provide them with adequate tools to work, and we need to have adequate funds available to cover the initial expenses of setting up the Tribunal's working environment.

There is a second reason why the budget restrictions have made our lives particularly difficult in the Tribunal. The need to investigate crimes which are being committed half a continent away, and in a constantly changing environment, calls for immediate and responsive action by our investigators. They must move while the events are fresh. When mass graves are suddenly available for inspection, we should not be agonizing over whether the funding for travel is available.

All these undertakings are costly — of that there is no doubt; but if the United Nations wants to hear the voice of justice speak loudly and clearly, then the Member States must be willing to pay the price.

One step in the right direction was the recent decision by the Secretary-General to give to all the relevant departments direct responsibility for implementing the cost-saving measures which have been put into effect. This is indeed welcome news to our Tribunal. At least the responsibility is now in our own hands to set priorities and spending goals. But this is not enough. We urge the Assembly to help us fulfil our mission by providing the badly needed resources.

For us to overcome the hurdles I have outlined so far, the increasing support of Members of the General Assembly is vital. In this connection, I am happy to report that so far a number of States have substantially assisted our Tribunal politically, morally and financially. In particular, the host country, the Netherlands, is providing unreserved and continuing assistance, for which we are deeply grateful. The European Union should also

be highly commended for its invaluable support in many areas; without this support our task would have been even more daunting.

We are aware at The Hague that the world is watching our every move very closely and with mixed feelings: generous expectations but also profound scepticism. We cannot afford not to fulfil these expectations; we must dispel this scepticism. The failure of our Tribunal would mean the failure of the Rwanda Tribunal as well, and the very idea of a permanent international criminal court could be set back for decades. Even more important, the Tribunal's failure would mean leaving unfulfilled the hopes and demands of so many victims in the former Yugoslavia who are insistently calling for justice.

It has been said that the two dominant feelings in our age are fear and indifference. The Tribunal is a symbol to show that the United Nations cannot be accused of indifference *vis-à-vis* the fear and suffering prevailing in the former Yugoslavia. Hence, to allow our Tribunal to fade away or eventually succumb to the obstacles I mentioned earlier would ultimately mean that the world community was impotent in the face of terrible human tragedies such as that currently unfolding in the former Yugoslavia.

Let me briefly tackle another topical matter, namely the possible impact on our Tribunal of successful peace negotiations. At present there appears to be a real prospect for a lasting peace in the region. Should that day arrive, is the Tribunal to become useless? The answer must be a clear "No". If anything, the importance of the Tribunal will be even greater. If there is to be a lasting peace, it must be accompanied by a sense of justice in the minds of all the citizens of, and in particular the victims of atrocities in, the former Yugoslavia. If at the end of a war torturers and their victims are treated alike, the war's legacy of hatred, resentment and acrimony will not have been snuffed out; rather, it will continue to smoulder. The existence of peace in such a climate would be precarious indeed. If, however, the Tribunal, as an impartial body, continues its work of bringing to justice at least some of the most egregious offenders, those who have suffered through four years of hellish war will be better able to find the forgiveness required for peace to last.

Indeed, with peace the Tribunal will become more efficient and better able to accomplish its mission. With peace, States will no longer be in a position to eschew cooperation with the Tribunal; they will have to comply with the Tribunal's requests to surrender suspects. Similarly, those States in the region which have so far evinced little interest in helping the Tribunal will now have a real stake in cooperating, in order to ensure their good standing at the United Nations.

Let me conclude by stressing once again that, despite the myriad difficulties encountered over the past year, the Judges at The Hague, indeed all those working for the Tribunal, have not been discouraged. Rather, they have worked unsparingly, bearing in mind the forceful words uttered 50 years ago this month, on 21 November 1945, by the United States Chief Prosecutor, Justice Jackson, in Nuremberg, with respect to the trial that was opening there. He said:

> "This trial represents mankind's desperate effort to apply the discipline of the law to statesmen who have used their powers of State to attack the foundations of the world's peace".

The Judges at The Hague feel that these words should hold true for the Tribunal as well. They too are making a "desperate effort" to pursue the goal of applying the discipline of international humanitarian law to those who have planned, directed or perpetrated horrific crimes in the former Yugoslavia.

I very much hope, now that the Tribunal has moved on to the second, operational stage of its development, that it will be able to bring to fruition its immense potential and thus show that international criminal justice can fulfil an indispensable role in the pacification of the world community.

Mr. Biegman (Netherlands): I am speaking as a representative of a country that has wholeheartedly supported the decision of the Security Council to establish an ad hoc tribunal for the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991. I am also the representative of the country where the seat of that Tribunal has been established.

Why did the Netherlands Government support that decision of the Security Council and why did my Government welcome the Tribunal to The Hague? Because, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom said in his statement at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, it is of the utmost importance not only that the terrible crimes committed in the

territory of the former Yugoslavia be condemned by the international community, but also that those responsible for those crimes, as well as the actual perpetrators, be prosecuted — as a matter of justice, and also as a matter of deterrence.

Impunity encourages future crimes against humanity. Impunity often follows from the unwillingness or inability of the State whose duty it would be to prosecute to do so. The Netherlands Government therefore sees the decision of the Security Council to establish the Tribunal, an impartial court that can take on that task and thereby try to put an end to impunity, as a necessary complement to the existing judicial system and as a milestone in the history of international criminal jurisdiction. For the first time since Nuremberg and Tokyo, the international community is holding individuals responsible for their actions during wartime and in situations of war. In the miserable history of the former Yugoslavia, this is one of the very few positive outcomes so far.

The President of the Tribunal, in his second report, rightly states that the Tribunal has started to meet the hopes and expectations of the victims in the former Yugoslavia and that the preparatory work has been completed and trial activity has begun, bringing the Tribunal closer to realizing its principal objectives as laid down in Security Council resolution 808 (1993).

The Netherlands Government would consider it a serious setback if this process were, for whatever reason, slowed down or jeopardized. It would be sad indeed if the Tribunal, for political or financial reasons, or through lack of cooperation, could not fulfil its task of applying the basic principles of humanitarian law. Such a situation would, moreover, have serious repercussions for the development of international law, for the authority of the Security Council, for the credibility of the quest for justice by the international community and for the efforts currently being undertaken to create a permanent international criminal court — a court which, in the opinion of our Government, should be the ultimate goal.

The Netherlands has always wholeheartedly supported the work of the Yugoslavia Tribunal. Its Government played an active role in the identification and acquisition of suitable premises for the Tribunal. It took care of converting an office building into an appropriate court building, and it put this at the disposal of the Tribunal, free of rent for the first year. The Netherlands Government also assumed the task of protecting those premises, as well as the Tribunal's personnel.

Netherlands experts support the investigation procedures free of charge, and recently the Government made $2 million available to the Tribunal to clear a backlog of documents and information material, which threatened to choke the administration of the Tribunal and, thereby, the progress of its work.

It will thus be clear that the proper functioning of the Tribunal is a matter on which the Netherlands bestows great care, because so much depends on it.

If the Tribunal is to be effective, it will need sufficient financial resources, as well as the cooperation of all States through the provision of all available information and the extradition of indicted suspects.

The Tribunal has made a good and solid start. It has begun its first proceedings — against Mr. Tadić. It declared itself competent to try this case, but deferred the actual trial, to allow the defence more time for proper preparation of its case. The Prosecutor is preparing indictments against other suspects, building on the experience gathered in the Tadić case. Formal investigations against Mr. Karadzic, General Mladic and others have started.

The Netherlands Government firmly believes that the Tribunal will be a success. With time, this success will make potential war criminals think twice before engaging in violations of humanitarian law. Just as important, it may break the cycle of revenge between peoples by putting the blame on individuals who were the main instigators and executors, and may thus provide a basis for lasting peace.

For these reasons, the Tribunal, in our opinion, deserves the unreserved support of the international community.

Mr. Kocetkov (Bosnia and Herzegovina): The authorities and the people of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the democratic public in the world, accepted and hailed the decision to establish the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, as an expression of the international community's determination to bring before the court of justice all those who took part in the preparation or execution of the policy of genocide and aggression against the sovereign countries and peoples in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

Those responsible for implementing the policies of nationalism and chauvinism must be held accountable and answerable for crimes not seen in Europe since the end of the Second World War. At the same time, they must cease engaging in pogroms, rapes, massacres, forced movements of civilian populations and the extinction of whole peoples. The issue here is that of the most serious violations of human rights — rights established in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva and numerous other international Conventions.

The Tribunal's function is not just to give satisfaction to the victims of the crimes; it is also to deter potential future criminals. More than 200,000 people — most of them innocent civilians: women and children, and predominantly Bosniak Muslims — have been killed in the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina alone. Thousands of people, mostly draft-age men and young boys, have disappeared. About 2 million people — almost half the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina — have been expelled from their homes. Thousands of women have been systematically raped, with the most monstrous of motives.

These are all components of a strategy and of tactics aimed at achieving goals of national Fascist policy and aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Besides, the aggressor, as well as terrorist gangs formed and supported by the aggressor, has systematically destroyed an entire non-Serbian heritage of history and civilization. Mosques and churches have been levelled, and Muslim cemeteries have been ploughed.

Right up to the present, what we have witnessed being carried out is a policy of destroying the signs of every civilization that does not accord with the aggressors' national or religious characteristics, in the territories they are temporarily occupying. These territories are temporarily occupied by paramilitary forces under the Pale national Fascist leadership of Karadzic and Mladic, both of whom, as the most prominent war criminals, have been indicted by the International Tribunal. Both are indeed war criminals, and their names must not be forgotten.

We consider that the work of the Prosecutor has been effective so far, and we expect the work of the Trial Chambers, too, to be effective.

The tragedy of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Rwanda has been referred to frequently during debates in this General Assembly session, in the context of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations — and rightly so.

Many of these facts are well known, but, in the name of truth and justice, what has happened should be made obvious to everyone. In this respect, we support and welcome the International Tribunal's report. We welcome with great pleasure the comment, in the report, that the International Tribunal

> "is now substantially closer to realizing its principal objectives as laid down in Security Council resolutions 808 (1993) and 827 (1993)." *(A/50/365, para. 1)*

The issue here is not revenge. The issue here is justice — justice in respect of all crimes committed; justice for the hundreds of thousands of people who have been subjected to unprecedented suffering; justice for the murdered and maimed children; justice for the thousands of raped women; justice for the destroyed cities and villages; justice for the separated families; justice for the people in besieged cities who have daily suffered torture for more than three years, being subjected to shelling and sniping, being deliberately and permanently deprived of electricity, water, medicine, food and the right to move about, and being prevented from undertaking the necessary medical evacuation of the sick and wounded.

These are the cases of Sarajevo, Gorazde, Bihac, Tuzla, Srebrenica, Zepa — cities which have been designated "safe areas" by the United Nations. There are also many other cities and villages in this situation. The suffering of those people must not be forgotten — for the sake of our children, for the sake of the future generations that should be able to live in peace and freedom and enjoy the basic human rights and freedoms to which the United Nations is solemnly committed.

Those are all reasons to request from everyone here, and in good faith to expect, as has so far been the case, full support for the International Tribunal. With this in mind, we point out that it is necessary to ensure the full support of all United Nations Member States for the work of the International Tribunal. This, above all, presumes, in accordance with the provisions of the statute of the Tribunal, the handing over of all of those persons indicted by the Tribunal for crimes committed. This also presumes all the other support necessary for the Tribunal to carry out its functions effectively — including financial, technical and procedural support, as well as an

increased number of judges, that is, an increased number of Trial Chambers.

The experience of the Tribunal's work and the concrete results of that experience are of crucial importance for deciding on the establishment of an international criminal court, which we support.

Giving full credit, full confidence and support to the Prosecutor, the Honourable Justice Goldstone, for his present work and everything he has done so far, we also request and expect that all criminals be indicted as soon as possible, if there is a legal basis for this and if all the necessary evidence has been gathered. We especially emphasize that the Tribunal must not allow legal proceedings against only the "small fish" to hide the most important instigators, planners, organizers and executors of the terrible crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Because of the global dimensions and the character of the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in other parts of the former Yugoslavia, the International Tribunal must gain our special support and have a special place, in the interest of the general principles of human justice.

In this respect, we insist that Radovan Karadzić, Ratko Mladić and all others who must answer for the terrible human tragedy inflicted upon millions of people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in other parts of the former Yugoslavia must be brought before the International Tribunal.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): Speaking on the report of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, I should like, first of all, to thank the President of the Tribunal, Judge Antonio Cassese, for his clear, comprehensive and thoughtful statement. Both that statement and the report show the many positive developments in the Tribunal's work, as well as the main difficulties in fulfilling the mandate entrusted to it by the United Nations. Italy is particularly pleased with the Tribunal's achievements, and is fully committed to helping overcome the remaining obstacles in its path.

Since its establishment in 1993, the Tribunal has come a long way towards setting up an effective judicial mechanism for the prosecution and punishment of crimes against international humanitarian law committed in the former Yugoslavia. Despite enormous problems, a number of important results have been achieved — thanks especially to the skill and dedication of the judges, the Prosecutor's office, and those non-governmental organizations that joined in the effort.

The Tribunal has now become fully operational. The Prosecutor has handed down indictments, all of which have been confirmed by the reviewing judges. Arrest warrants have been issued. Those warrants against political or military leaders, although not yet executed, have resulted in the exclusion of such persons from the negotiating table. Furthermore, hearings have been held before both the Trial Chambers and the Appeals Chambers. In one of those proceedings, 13 witnesses were heard in court. This activity was also made possible by the creation of all the necessary judicial infrastructures — another area where the Tribunal had to start from scratch.

Other major problems, as we have heard, still lie ahead. In order for the Tribunal to meet the expectations of the world community, the full cooperation of Member States is of crucial importance. States must cooperate by adopting national legislation to implement the statute of the Tribunal. Without such legislation, search and arrest warrants cannot be executed, nor can subpoenas be carried out. Adequate financial support for the Tribunal is also imperative. I am glad to say that Italy was the first country to adopt implementing legislation, and Italy has also made a sizeable financial contribution to the Tribunal's Trust Fund.

We very much hope that the current peace negotiations on the former Yugoslavia will strengthen the Tribunal's role, rather than jeopardizing it. The peace settlement should include clauses making it incumbent upon all the parties concerned to cooperate fully with the Tribunal. Peace and justice must go hand in hand.

In conclusion, let me emphasize another reason why the Tribunal must succeed. The International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the one on Rwanda are a sort of laboratory in the area of international criminal justice. They may prove to be of tremendous importance for the future establishment of a permanent criminal court. Italy has consistently advocated the creation of a permanent court, and has recently renewed its offer to host the diplomatic conference to adopt the relevant statute. We therefore cannot but fully support the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, not only to bring to justice the perpetrators of atrocious crimes against humanity, but also, allow me to repeat, as a

milestone on the road to establishing a permanent international criminal court.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Allow me at the outset to extend my appreciation to Mr. Antonio Cassese, the President of the International Tribunal, for submitting the second annual report of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991.

Peace in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be fully restored, and then trusted, unless those criminal elements who have organized and perpetrated the most horrible and deplorable atrocities in that region are brought to justice. The conscience of the whole world has been wounded by the practice of "ethnic cleansing" and by the grave violations of the laws or customs applicable in armed conflict, as well by the inhumane treatment directed against Bosnian Muslims by the Serbs, including genocide, the massive rape of women, torture and the forcible displacement of civilians. These crimes eventually persuaded the international community to urgently establish an ad hoc tribunal to prosecute and punish the perpetrators. This means that those criminal acts, which are beyond any explanation, are not to be condoned.

The gravity and seriousness of the crimes and breaches of international humanitarian law committed by the Serbs made it imperative that the International Tribunal, as an exceptional and unique case, be set up beyond the traditional approach of international law requiring the establishment of such a body by treaty. The unique character of the Tribunal, and indeed the hope expressed in the seventh preambular paragraph of Security Council resolution 827 (1993) that the Tribunal would

> "contribute to ensuring that such violations are halted and effectively redressed",

gave rise to high expectations for immediate action, irrespective of the fact that such judicial institutions normally come after the event, when the hostilities have come to an end.

With the removal of some obstacles that had impeded the functioning of the Tribunal at the initial stage, responsibility now rests upon this legal body to intensify its endeavours to achieve the objectives set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Serbian atrocities against the Muslim people of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina have in no way ceased. Recent reports have revealed that the Bosnian Muslims, in places such as Srebrenica, Zepa and Banja Luka, have been subjected to extremely harsh treatment, such as "ethnic cleansing", massacre and massive torture. Had the perpetrators of those grave crimes previously faced serious political and legal reactions, the world would not have witnessed such tragic events. The Islamic Republic of Iran condemns all those crimes, and urges the Tribunal to take the most vigorous action against those responsible.

The International Tribunal, which has the support of the international community, should ensure that under no circumstances is the imperative of justice ignored. To this end, the indictment and punishment of those criminals is of the utmost urgency. In this context, peace negotiations with the very individuals who have been indicted by the Tribunal should be avoided under any circumstances.

The Tribunal should fulfil its task effectively and expeditiously regardless of political expediencies. It is of great satisfaction that the second report of the Tribunal states that

> "Whatever the political consequences or the eventual outcome of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the Tribunal will not flinch from this task." *(A/50/365, para. 5)*

Furthermore, the proper functioning of the Tribunal can heal the wounds resulting from war crimes in the Balkans. This can create trust, confidence and hope for the future, all of which are vital for the realization of lasting peace and tranquillity in the region.

For the Tribunal to be successful and effective, the cooperation of all States is undoubtedly necessary and crucial. It provides an appropriate solution to the problems referred to in paragraph 191 of the report under consideration. An important indication of such cooperation could be the pledge of all States not to harbour war criminals. In our view, the United Nations, through its various bodies, can adopt certain measures to ensure such cooperation.

Despite the remaining problems still hampering the satisfactory functioning of the Tribunal, it is indeed a positive development that some individuals have been indicted for their criminal offences. Further steps should be taken to punish them, as well as to bring all other

violators to justice. We share the view expressed in the report that the Tribunal has a historical role in setting precedents for future international criminal forums. As envisaged in the report, the Tribunal, if it acts in a just and effective manner, will

> "send a message to the victims of appalling crimes that humanity will not turn its back on them." *(A/50/365, para. 199)*

In conclusion, the Islamic Republic of Iran, on its part, stands ready to cooperate fully with the Tribunal in fulfilling its task.

Mr. Gnehm (United States of America): The President of the Tribunal, Mr. Antonio Cassese, has honoured this body today with a thorough introduction of the report of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. President Cassese and the other Tribunal judges are performing, and performing extremely well, a difficult and challenging task. They have had to develop procedures for operating in an environment where thoroughness and fairness are absolutely essential and precedents are inexact and few. Their daily efforts serve to bolster international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. They have earned our respect, and they deserve our support.

President Cassese's presence and his statement here today reflect the critical role that the General Assembly continues to play in connection with the war-crimes Tribunals. The Assembly's condemnation of the crimes against humanity that have been committed in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia illustrates the universal nature of the outrage over those atrocities. It is here in this Assembly that funding for the Tribunals is decided, and it will be the level of financial and political support received from members of this Assembly that will play a major role in determining whether the Tribunals achieve their full potential.

The success of the Tribunal in achieving its purpose is a matter of concern to the United States Government at the highest levels. In a recent statement given in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Nuremburg trials, President Clinton reaffirmed America's strong support for the Tribunals and for their goals. The American people want to see those responsible for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity brought to justice. We want to deter such crimes, and we want to help nations torn apart by violence to begin a process of healing and reconciliation.

In the President's words, the

> "indictments are not negotiable. Those accused ... must be tried, and, if found guilty, they must be held accountable. Some people are concerned that pursuing peace in Bosnia and prosecuting war criminals are incompatible goals. But I believe they are wrong. There must be peace for justice to prevail, and there must be justice when peace prevails."

In those same remarks, President Clinton said that

> "nations all around the world that value freedom and tolerance [should] establish a permanent international court to prosecute, with the support of the United Nations Security Council, serious violations of international humanitarian law."

Such a permanent court would, again in the President's words, serve as a

> "tribute to the people who did such important work in Nuremburg",

and it would build on the experience garnered during the deliberations of the current United Nations Tribunals.

In his statement today, President Cassese identifies a number of issues facing the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. One involves the need for cooperation by key Member States.

In this connection, my Government has recently been in contact with President Milosevic of Serbia and Montenegro and elicited from him a firm commitment to cooperate with the Tribunal in its work, whether or not armed conflict continues. We expect these encouraging words to be matched by deeds.

Similar assurances have not been forthcoming from the Bosnian Serb Administration in Pale. Member States should demand of Pale what the statute of the Tribunal demands: full cooperation. In the current peace talks my Government is emphasizing the importance we attach to all parties' cooperation with the Tribunal in all aspects of its work.

President Cassese also spoke of the need for adequate resources. Accordingly, we applaud the financial and other support given by many Governments and by the European Union. We are grateful for the

voluntary contributions made by several Governments and the efforts of non-governmental organizations to support the work of the Tribunals. But these efforts must be continued, sustained and enlarged. The Tribunals deserve the broadest possible support.

For its part, my Government assures the Tribunals of its backing, which to date has been considerable. In addition to the 1994-95 regular budget assessment of $5.5 million that we have paid for the Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the United States has made a voluntary contribution of $3 million, in addition to providing more than 20 prosecutors, investigators and other experts, as well as various supplies and items of equipment at our own expense. Our total commitment to date of about $13.5 million is a beginning, and we encourage other Member States to join us in pledging sufficient funds for the Tribunal to meet its responsibilities.

We applaud recent actions by the United Nations Secretariat increasing the flexibility of its support for the Tribunal, including the transfer of some fiscal authority to the Tribunal.

Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand), Vice-President, took the Chair.

As President Cassese's statement today attests, the ad hoc Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda are new and important ventures. My Government strongly supports them and urges others to do the same. The success of the tribunals will have an important impact not only on the conflicts to which they specifically relate, but on future efforts to address violations of international humanitarian law. We must continue our efforts to find effective ways to investigate and prosecute war criminals. We must heed the lessons of Nuremburg. In so doing, and only in so doing, will we fulfil the responsibilities of our own time.

Mr. Yoogalingam (Malaysia): At the outset, allow me on behalf of my delegation to express our appreciation to the President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Mr. Antonio Cassese, for the very comprehensive second annual report of the Tribunal submitted to the Assembly, as contained in document A/50/365. My delegation would also like to express our deep appreciation to the Government of the Netherlands for its cooperation and the support given to the Tribunal since its establishment.

Having carefully studied the report, my delegation would like to make the following points. First, my delegation is concerned over the financial difficulties still confronting the Tribunal, particularly after more than two years of its existence. While recognizing that some aspects of this problem were addressed by the General Assembly this summer, the important work of this Tribunal should not be allowed to grind to a halt as a result of budgetary constraints. We need to undertake specific measures to ensure secure and stable financing for the Tribunal to fulfil its role fully and effectively. We hope that the international community will be more forthcoming in its contributions to finance the activities of the Tribunal in order to ensure that justice is done in the former Yugoslavia. To date, 17 countries have made voluntary contributions, including Malaysia, which has contributed $2 million.

Secondly, we are also concerned about the drastic financial measures recently imposed by the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, Department of Administration and Management, on the Tribunal. In this regard, we support the resolution unanimously adopted by the Tribunal at its eighth plenary session on 6 October 1995. We share its view that

> "it would be contrary to the interests of justice to hamper its activities in the manner sought by the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management by restricting travel and recruitment."

We also share the view that simply curtailing the activities of the Tribunal and awaiting an improvement in the financial situation of the United Nations is not the best option. In this regard, we urge the Secretary-General to reconsider his decision.

Thirdly, we are pleased to note that some actions have been taken by the Tribunal to prosecute war criminals. We note that on 24 July 1995 the Prosecutor submitted an indictment against Dr. Karadzić and General Mladić, the two Bosnian Serb leaders charged, either on the basis of superior authority or direct responsibility, with genocide, crimes against humanity, violations of the laws or customs of war and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

Fourthly, we share the observation contained in paragraph 191 of the report which underlines the necessity for Member States to cooperate with the

Tribunal to bring criminals to justice, considering that the Tribunal has

> "no enforcement agencies at its disposal".

At the same time, we also wish to acknowledge as well as underline the important role of non-governmental organizations in assisting the work of the Tribunal.

We hope that justice will be served, as we firmly believe that criminals cannot go unpunished nor the victims be denied justice. As the adage goes, "justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done", to atone for the thousands killed, raped, brutalized and maimed in the former Yugoslavia. Let me conclude by saying that the credibility and effectiveness of the Tribunal will be judged by its action, and for this we need the political commitment and the financial support of all.

Mr. Çelem (Turkey): We are happy to see positive developments in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. The adoption of the agreed basic principles of Geneva and New York, and the ongoing peace talks in Dayton, foster our optimism. However, we are aware of the fact that there may be stumbling blocks and set-backs on the long and difficult road to a just and viable peace. For this reason, we must never lose sight of the fact that the long-awaited response to the aggressor has opened the current window of opportunity to bring an end to the aggression and genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The recently created momentum for a genuine peace could only be maintained with this awareness. In this context, the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia is extremely important.

We have studied very carefully the second annual report of the International Criminal Tribunal which is contained in document A/50/365. We have also listened with great interest to the thought-provoking statement of the President of the Tribunal, Mr. Antonio Cassese. As he stated:

> "Regrettably, two of the entities of the former Yugoslavia have so far refused to cooperate: I refer to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Bosnian Serb Administration in Pale". *(supra, p. 3)*

We have noted with grave concern his observation that the total lack of cooperation of these two "entities" has been greatly hampering the work of the Tribunal. We call on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to start its cooperation with the Tribunal without further delay.

We fully agree with the chief Prosecutor's statement that

> "where we find evidence that the political and military leadership knew or had reason to know of serious violations of international humanitarian law and failed to take actions to prevent these violations or to punish those who committed them, we also will seek those leaders accountable."

The chief Prosecutor has so far issued nine indictments charging individuals, including the political and military leaders responsible for the grave violations of international humanitarian law. These indictments are crucial steps for a successful prosecution process.

We attach utmost importance to the admonition of Mr. Cassese that peace without justice is no peace at all. We fully endorse his remarks:

> "If there is to be a lasting peace, it must be accompanied by a sense of justice in the minds of all the citizens of, and in particular the victims of atrocities in, the former Yugoslavia. If at the end of a war torturers and their victims are treated alike, the war's legacy of hatred, resentment and acrimony will not have been snuffed out; rather, it will continue to smoulder. The existence of peace in such a climate would be precarious indeed." *(supra, p. 4)*

Indeed, if peace is to triumph, justice must prevail. And only then can a climate be created where the people can live and work together free from fear. The responsibility falls on us. Criminals cannot go unpunished nor the victims denied justice. We will continue to support the International Criminal Tribunal in discharging its historic task.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 49?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 162

Universal Congress on the Panama Canal

Draft resolution (A/50/L.13)

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Panama to introduce draft resolution A/50/L.13.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: For many reasons related to the history of Panama, from the time of its discovery by Spain until our day, it is a special honour for me to introduce draft resolution A/50/L.13, "Universal Congress on the Panama Canal", which my delegation has submitted to this fiftieth session of the General Assembly together with the representatives of France and the United States.

The reasons for this joint submission were explained at the meeting of the General Committee on 20 September last, when the inclusion of the item on the agenda was requested. At that time, we referred to the Panamanian Government's wish to obtain United Nations support for this initiative linked to the future of the Panama Canal and its role in the twenty-first century.

With that intention in mind, we appointed Mr. Fernando Manfredo, the High Commissioner of the Republic of Panama for the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, to be a member of our delegation. For a number of years he was Deputy Administrator and then Administrator of this interoceanic waterway.

With the Assembly's permission, I would venture to suggest that the draft resolution contains the necessary elements to highlight the convergences between the competence of the United Nations and the implications of the Congress in some areas of that competence.

Reference is also made in the draft to facts and dates which mark the process that will culminate in 1999 with Panama's exercise of full sovereignty over all its territory and assumption of total responsibility for the control and functioning of the Panama Canal, for which we enjoy the support of brotherly countries of the Americas and elsewhere.

We should also like to draw attention to the very pertinent reference to 1998 as International Year of the Ocean and to the World Exposition to take place in Lisbon by decision of the Government of Portugal.

The draft resolution, which we are asking the Assembly to adopt by consensus, will help to make the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal a part of the rich experience of the United Nations with regard to international and multidisciplinary meetings as a form of world diplomacy and a way of promoting brotherhood among men through knowledge.

Beginning in December 1999, Panama will be assuming a responsibility which we firmly intend to honour. By preparing and holding the Universal Congress, we shall be sending a powerful signal to the world on how international cooperation, taking into account the interests and expectations of many countries, disciplines and activities, can work to define and assure the role that the Panama Canal will play in the twenty-first century in problems and preoccupations that are part of the subject-matter of the United Nations: the law of the sea, international trade, the environment, and sustainable development.

In addition, with the holding of the Universal Congress, my Government hopes to bring the scientific, technological and cultural life of the Isthmus of Panama into harmony with that of the advanced centres of the world.

For many reasons related to the history of my country, and having to do with my own record as a champion of Panama's sovereignty over the whole of our national territory, I feel that at this time I am representing an age-old aspiration of all the men and women of Panama. Unquestionably it will be a source of deep satisfaction to bring the twentieth century to a close with an act which will again bear witness to the entire world of the continuing universalist vocation of the people of Panama.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Bolivia, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and the Caribbean States.

Mr. Camacho Omiste (Bolivia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: As Chairman of the Regional Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for the month of November 1995, it is my honour to speak on agenda item 162 entitled "Universal Congress on the Panama Canal".

For many years, Latin American and Caribbean countries have followed with common interest items relating to the Panama Canal and the negotiations which led to the signing of the treaties known as the "Torrijos-

Carter Treaties" on 7 September 1977. On that historic occasion, the Heads of State, Heads of Government and representatives of the American Republics witnessed the signing of the Treaties, and on the same date they signed the Washington Declaration recognizing:

> "the importance for the hemisphere, for trade and for world shipping of agreements designed to ensure the accessibility and continued neutrality of the Panama Canal".

Panama is a centre of universal significance, a keystone in relations between the northern and southern hemispheres on the American continent and for interoceanic communication for all peoples. Some of Europe's influence in the sixteenth century had reached broad swathes of South America, and Panama became a required passage for a significant proportion of world trade. Consequently, it was also a meeting-point of economic and political interests with global influence. These geographical and historical realities lend extreme significance to events in this special region. How can we be indifferent to the problems, hopes and achievements of our fellow peoples that live in our part of the world?

In the conviction that the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal will promote understanding and stability, and also the development and international cooperation that will make possible the orderly and sustainable use of the resources of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, the delegations of the Latin American and Caribbean countries wish through me to express their support for draft resolution A/50/L.13, and to request that it be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Marrero (United States of America): As a co-sponsor of the draft resolution before the Assembly, the United States Government believes firmly that Panama's Universal Congress on the Panama Canal is of major importance, not only for Panama but for world commerce. The United States and Panama are working closely together to ensure that the transfer of the Canal to Panama on 31 December 1999 will be smooth. During the official working visit to Washington by President Pérez Balladares, President Clinton pledged full cooperation to place the Canal under Panamanian control on schedule.

The United States is confident that Panama will be ready to assume control over the Canal by the end of the century. Even now, Panamanian employees are fulfilling the vast majority of tasks associated with the Canal's operation. The Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, which Panama plans to host in 1997, offers a unique opportunity for the world community to get a first-hand look at Canal operations and the preparations for a seamless transfer of responsibility.

We ask all Member States to join us in strongly supporting Panama's initiative in hosting the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, and to assist it in this important undertaking.

Mr. Gaussot (France) (*interpretation from French*): In 1879, the *Société de géographie de Paris* convened an international congress, under the chairmanship of Ferdinand de Lesseps, to study the question of an interoceanic canal. The congress decided, in a resolution, to build a canal along a line that would link the Gulf of Limón, on the Atlantic, and the Bay of Panama, on the Pacific. And so the Panama Canal was born.

The Government of Panama has taken the initiative of convening a new Universal Congress, to be held in 1997 — in other words, 118 years after the Paris congress. The objective of this international meeting will be to contribute to ensuring the effective use of the canal, integrated into an open multilateral trading system, under a dynamic administration capable of overcoming the problems of development in the twenty-first century.

The purpose of the resolution before the Assembly is to support the Panamanian Government's initiative.

France is happy to see that the Panama Canal, which has a special place in our national history, will thus enjoy lasting development and that the authorities that will take over management in under four years are concerned with ensuring that the Canal fits smoothly into the international economy. For those reasons, France decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution.

We are certain that the choices made by the Government of Panama are in keeping with the universal objective that motivated Ferdinand de Lesseps when, over a century ago, he set about building the Canal, and we are certain also that the durability of that spirit of universality will contribute to the maintenance and development of the excellent relations that already exist between France and Panama.

Mr. Manfredo (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is a great honour for me to speak before the General Assembly, as representative of my country, on

the subject of the Panama Canal, its importance for the world and its prospects on the eve of the new millennium.

This is a doubly significant honour because this is the year that the United Nations is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, 50 years during which it has accomplished a very difficult though noble task in maintaining peace and finding negotiated solutions for a manifold and diverse range of international problems and conflicts.

I must say, first, that the Panama Canal is a peaceful undertaking that in the 81 years it has been in operation has been an important element in the economic and social development of the world's peoples. The Panama Canal has made a positive contribution to the economic development of many countries which find the interoceanic route the cheapest and most direct for transporting materials and products in their international trade.

The Panama Canal is part of the world's transport infrastructure. Despite the development of alternative systems, the Canal will continue to play an important role in the world's sea-borne trade. Last year, ships flying the flags of 78 countries used the Canal as they made over 12,000 crossings of the isthmus, east-west and west-east.

In Washington, on 7 September 1977, the Heads of State and Government that were present at the signing of the Canal Treaties, known as the "Torrijos-Carter Treaties", recognized

> "... the importance for the hemisphere, for trade and for world shipping of agreements designed to ensure the accessibility and continued neutrality of the Panama Canal".

The Canal Treaties, signed 18 years ago, cover the full reversion of administration and control of the interoceanic waterway to the Republic of Panama starting at noon on 31 December 1999. This means that we Panamanians will be assuming an important historic responsibility at the birth of a new century and a new millennium. We will not only be recovering our principal natural resource and restoring the integrity of our territory, thus consolidating the long process of independence; we will also be assuming, before the eyes of the world community and under the gaze of our national destiny, the obligation to manage the Panama Canal so that this great global shipping lane continues to function as efficiently, economically and safely as it has thus far and to make the necessary investments to respond to the demands of its use.

Facing this national commitment with a sense of responsibility, the President of the Republic of Panama, Mr. Ernesto Pérez Balladares, in an executive decree dated 25 January 1995, called for the holding of the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, which will take place in Panama City from 7-10 September 1997. Historic precedents exist for a Congress of this kind: the Amphictyonic Congress of Panama of 1826, convoked by Simón Bolívar, the Liberator, and the Congress convened by the Société de Géographie de Paris, under the presidency of Count Ferdinand de Lesseps, in Paris in 1879.

One of the primary objectives of this Congress is to show the international community, the maritime sector, the users of the interoceanic waterway and those countries whose international trade is closely linked to and dependent upon the operation of the Canal that the transition from a North American Canal to a Panamanian Canal is taking place normally through a coordinated process of transfer of responsibilities.

The Transition Committee appointed by the Government of Panama has been operating for several months now. It is responsible for the adoption of measures and initiatives to ensure the smooth operational transition of the Canal's entire administration to Panamanian hands. To achieve this goal, the Panamanian Transition Committee works in close and harmonious cooperation with its North American counterpart.

It is important to emphasize that the Governments of Panama and of the United States are carrying out an expeditious transition process aimed at ensuring the continued and efficient functioning of the interoceanic waterway and at providing structures and policies that will give users full confidence of having continued access to the Canal.

The convocation of the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal and its holding two years from now constitute part of the transition process, in the area of planning the future strategy for the Canal. The Congress seeks the lofty goal of bringing together statesmen and representatives of Governments, of international organizations, of public and private academic institutions, of the shipping community and of international transport companies so that they may consider together the role that the Panama Canal should play in the twenty-first century.

The Government of Panama hopes that the Congress will not only lead the community of users of the Canal to reaffirm its full confidence in Panamanians' ability to manage the Canal efficiently and effectively in the coming century, but will also make them feel that they are participants in the formulation of administrative policies and practices that make it possible for management to serve them, and the economic community in general better. It is worth noting that Panama's confidence in its ability to manage the Canal is based, *inter alia*, on the fact that currently more than 90 per cent of the staff that operate the Canal at various levels of responsibility are Panamanian, including the general manager.

The convocation of the Universal Congress of the Panama Canal corresponds with my country's objective with the spirit that moves it to align itself with the new trends towards a global partnership for sustainable development, which implies the necessity to formulate, through cooperation, a balanced, integrated approach to issues concerning the environment, trade and development. Among its main goals are the promotion of international cooperation in order to achieve an orderly, sustainable use and development of the resources of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and a rational exploitation and development of the Canal basin and the coastal areas that gives priority consideration to the water requirements for the Canal's operation.

We already have a draft agenda for the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal. The Congress will see studies on policies and legal structures and forecasts of international maritime demands. In addition, studies on human resources, operations and maintenance, water resources and protection of the environment will be carried out. Panama will report to the participants in the Congress on what it has done in terms of organizational structure, goals and objectives, legal framework and administrative rules and procedures for the operations of the Canal starting in the year 2000. Workshops will be held on canal traffic, the financial structure of the enterprise, toll policy, strategic planning and the Treaty concerning the Permanent Neutrality of the Panama Canal.

During its four days of work, the Congress will deal with the issue of broadening the Gaillard Cut, the third set of locks, forecasts of long-term demand and the viewpoints and ideas of the users of the Canal. It will also deal with maritime agencies, the operation of ports, the supplying of vessels, repair services, the registry of Panamanian vessels and the market for the transshipment of cargo.

The Government of Panama will make a presentation to the Congress on investment opportunities in the areas adjacent to the banks of the Canal that have reverted to Panama and that will serve to support and develop shipping and world commerce. The general and regional plan on the use of reverted areas will be introduced, along with an analysis of the many opportunities for developing industrial and commercial centres in these areas.

The Universal Congress on the Panama Canal constitutes in essence an invitation to the international community to come to Panama in September 1997 so that together we may cast a view to the future and jointly examine the Canal's role in the development of international trade in the new world full of challenges and opportunities that will arrive with the twenty-first century.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/50/L.13.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/50/L.13?

Draft resolution A/50/L.13 was adopted (resolution 50/12).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 162?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 40 *(continued)*

Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal

Draft resolution (A/50/L.15)

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Saint Lucia, His Excellency the Honourable Edward Innocent, Minister for Community Development, Social Affairs, Youth, Sports, Cooperatives and Local Government.

Mr. Innocent (Saint Lucia): The English claim that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of

Eton, and I accept the theory that the discipline and skills required in war can best be inculcated through the attitudes acquired and encouraged on the field of sport. But today, the joy of having the sporting achievements of the International Olympic Committee aired in this Assembly is clouded by the news of the untimely death of Prime Minister Rabin. This is cause for serious reflection. We cannot be too smug about battles being won on the basis of the virtues of the world of sport. We must use the coincidence of these two events to reflect on the ideal that our playing-fields should become polytechnics for peace, not preparatory schools for war.

It is fitting that Ministers for Sport, like myself, can come to this Mecca of freedom, justice and equality to express openly our views on the value of sport to our communities. The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, lit the torch for us when he said:

> "The Olympic Ideal is a hymn to tolerance and understanding between people and cultures".

In my country, Saint Lucia, it is precisely this perception that induced us to become members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and to work hard to ensure that our National Olympic Committee lives up to the ideals of the IOC.

Small countries face tremendous disadvantages in the fiercely competitive world of sport. We cannot afford the basic facilities to train and develop our athletic skills. We have no adequate stadium for our games, no cinder track, no extensive coaching facilities for the many fine players from rural areas, who are destined to remain unknown. Despite our shortage of facilities, however, we are attempting to establish mini-stadiums island-wide, and we have started the erection of a national sports centre in the southern part of the island. It is our aim to construct multi-purpose courts in various communities around the island. This is part of a general review of our national sports policy.

Our size and our indigence have not prevented us from producing athletes of world class, such as Rick Wayne, who stormed the heights of body-building by winning the Mr. World, Mr. America and Mr. Universe titles. There is hope. The International Olympic Committee has already demonstrated, throughout the developing world, that it is dedicated to bringing diverse peoples together in bonds of friendship and good will. It has also shown its intention to help disadvantaged young people to attain great heights in sports.

I can safely say that the Olympic Movement has created a level playing-field. People of diverse cultural backgrounds, varying religious beliefs and different ideologies have been brought together to compete with one another under acceptable rules. The coming together of peoples, nations and ethnic groups is a fundamental element of global human existence. I commend and laud the International Olympic Committee for this feat.

Today, every nation wants to be part of the Olympic Ideal. Every nation wants to be part of this great international global fraternity. This is because we understand the role of the International Olympic Committee in our physical, mental, psychological, social and human development. Indeed, the International Olympic Committee has served as a model for other international sporting bodies and other organizations. In that regard, its role as an arbiter in times of conflict is significant.

The Olympic Ideal is the promotion of international understanding among the youth of the world through sports and culture, in order to advance the harmonious development of humankind. There is no doubt that we have been building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal.

As indicated in resolution 49/29 of 1994, the International Olympic Committee is collaborating with relevant organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system. This is evident in areas such as the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization.

Finally, we have recognized in this debate the tremendous benefits that sports can bring to the frustrated youth in our communities, who move rudderless through life, with no value system to support them. We have seen the value of tolerance and understanding, which are nurtured on the field of sport. We salute the joint efforts of the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee in bringing the peoples of the world to mutual enjoyment of the physical, cultural and spiritual riches that this Earth offers. The Government and the people of Saint Lucia wish to express their full support for these two institutions as they celebrate their respective anniversaries.

The Acting President: I should like to inform the Assembly that the representative of Qatar has requested permission to participate in the debate on this item. Inasmuch as the list of speakers was closed yesterday morning, I ask the Assembly whether there is any objection to the inclusion of this delegation.

As I see no objection, Qatar is included in the list of speakers.

The next speaker is Mr. Vetumbuavi Veii, Director at the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Namibia.

Mr. Veii (Namibia): It is indeed an honour for me to represent my country in this Assembly during its consideration of draft resolution A/50/L.15, entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal".

The presence, during this special commemorative meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, of several Ministers responsible for sports in their respective States, as well as of the President of the International Olympic Committee, His Excellency Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, and other key figures of the Olympic Movement is eloquent testimony to the fact that sports can be a force for peace and, therefore, can contribute to the resolution of internal and global problems.

It is well known that my country, Namibia, was involved in a bitter war against foreign domination and the policy of apartheid. Our country was divided along racial lines. However, in 1990, when we attained independence, our President, His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, introduced the policy of national reconciliation, and sport was designated as one of the driving forces to unite our people.

Although health and education account for the highest proportion of our national budget, a modest percentage is allocated to the Ministry of Youth and Sports. However, we have managed to establish basic sporting facilities for our people, particularly in areas neglected during the previous dispensation. And we intend to establish such facilities throughout the country by the year 2000.

As a country that was involved in a long and bitter struggle for liberation, Namibia has many disabled people and, therefore, has created an organization for the physically disabled. As a matter of fact, one of our disabled athletes, Mr. Greyling, has been invited to participate in the upcoming New York Marathon.

In spite of the small size of our population, coupled with lack of funds, Namibia as a country has nevertheless managed to participate in each and every major sporting event. Since we attained independence five years ago, we have taken part in the Barcelona Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games, the World Athletic Championships, the World Cup Preliminary Competition, the All Africa Games and the African Cup of Nations.

In Namibia today, former enemies are now competing as opponents locally and as teammates internationally when representing Namibia. The role that sport has played to reconcile our people cannot be overemphasized.

Since I mentioned the Barcelona Olympic Games, allow me to avail myself of this opportunity to thank His Excellency Mr. Samaranch — first, for accepting Namibia as a family member of the Olympic Movement immediately after our independence. Our acceptance in the Olympic Movement opened the way for one of our top athletes, Frankie Fredericks, to win two silver medals in the 100- and 200-metre sprints. And, believe me, his victories were indeed powerful motivating and unifying forces for our people. Each and every Namibian, regardless of his or her colour, social background or religion, supported Frankie. Again, this is testimony to the reconciliatory role that sport can play.

Secondly, I would also like to thank the President of the International Olympic Committee for taking time to visit Namibia last year. It was indeed gratifying for us, as Namibians, to see that Mr. Samaranch made time to visit all the members of his Committee, including the small ones, such as Namibia.

And it was indeed encouraging to listen to him yesterday, when he said:

> "It is vital that the National Olympic Committees maintain excellent relations with their respective Governments, and especially with the ministries of youth and sports."

The fact that Governments recognize the autonomy of the National Olympic Committees is important, but it is equally important for these Committees to realize that they do not operate in a vacuum. Therefore, harmonious relationships between Governments and National Olympic Committees are of paramount importance for the future of sport, and they should be encouraged by the highest authorities.

I am happy to inform the General Assembly that the Namibia National Olympic Committee has, in view of the forthcoming 1996 Olympic Games, started a programme to promote Olympism among our young people in Namibia. One of its first activities was the publication of a brochure under the patronage of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Namibia. "Operation Excellence", as it is termed, is aimed at enabling the best of our Namibian athletes to take part in the 1996 Olympics. This is a combined effort by the Ministries of Youth and Sports, and Basic Education and Culture, and by the National Olympic Committee.

Finally, work is also already under way to launch the preparation stage for Namibia's participation in the Commonwealth Games in Sydney.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Bangladesh, Mr. M. Shahjahan Omar.

Mr. Omar (Bangladesh): It is indeed a great pleasure for me to speak on this auspicious occasion in which we celebrate, during this fiftieth United Nations, year the centennial anniversary of the modern Olympic Games. Both these occasions are imbued with a special ambience of hope and idealism and a sense and spirit of optimism.

Sport is a singularly unifying factor, bringing together people from all nations, from all cultures and from all backgrounds to strive for the same goal of excellence. The pursuit of this goal unleashes the potency of youth, allowing it to be channelled and translated into a multiplicity of constructive endeavours for society.

Sport is certainly an invitation to competition — but it is competition conditioned by tolerance and full respect for the rights of others. This inherent element of restraint and its studied exercise is a crucial norm of democracy. Sport and the inculcation of this spirit of equality, tolerance and dignity are thus a vital means to train youth around the world to live in harmony and cooperation while striving for perfection.

Sport is an ideal mechanism to bring about cohesion among different countries, to promote understanding and to bring peoples and nations closer together. There can be no doubt that the Olympic Ideal contributes to this end and that the call for an Olympic Truce, in which all hostilities must cease during the Games, is an objective worth supporting, to mobilize not only youth around the globe in the cause of peace but, through them, all humankind.

The Olympic Ideal enjoins upon us all to build a better, more peaceful and united world. By placing the spirit and ideal of sportsmanship in the forefront, it paces humanity to strive for the better things of life, for peace, prosperity and progress. Bangladesh is committed to the spirit of the Olympic Ideal, which has as its foundation the call for understanding, tolerance, solidarity and dignity.

Draft resolution A/50/L.15 supports increased cooperation between the International Olympic Committee and the United Nations in different social programmes. Furthermore, it encourages Governments to devote attention to the development of youth and a wide variety of youth-related activities. We are therefore particularly happy to cosponsor the draft resolution before the Assembly and commend it for adoption by acclamation.

The Acting President: I now call upon the representative of Suriname, Mrs. Irma E. Klein-Loemban Tobing.

Mrs. Klein-Loemban Tobing (Suriname): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to extend sincere greetings and words of praise to the President of the International Olympic Committee, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, and at the same time to thank him most heartily for all his efforts towards the sport movement in my country. Allow me, at the same time, to extend greetings to and express solidarity with all delegations participating in this important meeting.

It is a privilege to be a cosponsor of this widely supported draft resolution contained in document A/50/L.15, which promotes sport and the Olympic Ideal, with a view to building a peaceful and better world and strengthening the moral and physical capacities of our peoples.

The Suriname Olympic Committee gained broad support from the President of the Republic of Suriname and the Ministers of Education, Sport and Culture; Foreign Affairs; and Social Welfare, when they were presented with the letters of the President of the International Olympic Committee on the Olympic Truce and the Barcelona document regarding the "Earth pledge".

On that occasion the President of the Republic of Suriname assured the Suriname Olympic Committee and, through that organization, the International Olympic Committee that the Surinamese Government always

supports peace, good relations between nations and the endeavour of the Olympic Movement to take good care of the environment.

Sport unites. Sport promotes love and understanding among peoples and nations. On various occasions — in Seoul, South Korea, in 1988; in Barcelona, Spain, in 1992; and recently, in August 1995, in Göteborg, Sweden — Suriname has experienced the importance of the presence of young male and female sport heroes in putting a country in the spotlight and at the same time in promoting and improving the well-being of its peoples.

My delegation is fully aware that in moments of threats to and violations of peace and human dignity, it is important strongly to promote the participation of our young people in particular in national as well as international sport movements, in order to create peace, understanding, love, respect, harmony among peoples, to improve the quality of life and to translate into reality the well-known principle of *mens sana in corpore sano* — a healthy spirit in a healthy body.

The Republic of Suriname is very grateful for the opportunity to participate in the international sport movement through its governmental and non-governmental organizations and through its Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, its Surinamese Olympic Committee and other national sport organizations such as the National Special Olympics Movement.

It is only within the context of the international sport movement that the Surinamese sport movement can achieve knowledge, know-how, strength, inspiration and sportspersonship.

Since Suriname really wants to be an integral part of a peaceful and better world, we therefore again commit ourselves to continued and strong participation in the Olympic Movement and its ideals throughout the world, in order to promote peace, friendship, tolerance, dignity, health, harmony, solidarity and human rights in general in today's world. The yearly Inter-Guyanese Games between the young people of Guyana, French Guyana and Suriname and the useful cooperation in the field of sport between the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, Suriname and the Netherlands must be placed in this context.

In conclusion, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to commend sport leaders all over the world for their tireless efforts to train children, young people, and sportswomen and sportsmen to become true servants of the Olympic Ideal — true servants of peace.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Kuwait, Mr. Saleh Alnafeesi, Deputy General Director for Youth Affairs.

Mr. Alnafeesi (Kuwait) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I am very pleased to see the interest of this Organization in young people and sports and the role this plays in international affairs, and I am pleased also at the fact that General Assembly meetings are dealing with this topic. This is a positive sign.

When we speak today of the Olympic Ideal which aims basically at strengthening the concepts of peace and brotherhood between peoples, we take this ideal to mean the renunciation of anything that would stand in the way of the new world order and obstruct its march towards the noble objectives of peaceful coexistence and the strengthening of the principles of security and stability and friendship, which are fundamental to the future of our peoples on the eve of the twenty-first century.

Today we are commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, repository of the hopes of peoples in a continued life of safety and dignity. Next summer, the XXVI Olympic Games will be held in Atlanta, USA. The fact that this will coincide with the hundredth anniversary of the Olympic Games, demonstrates the international community's interest in ensuring the success of such events, wherein the world reaffirms its optimism with regard to the role of sport and of the activities of youth in consolidating the hopes of peoples in peaceful coexistence.

While this meeting is held in reaffirmation of the noble Olympic Ideal, the athletic circles of Kuwait miss many athletes who continue to be incarcerated in the prisons of the Iraqi regime which ignores the international appeals calling for their release.

Since the beginnings of the Olympic Movement, the Kuwaiti Government has taken it upon itself to highlight the importance of strengthening these high ideals, which contribute to the creation of a civilized world. In this respect, the State of Kuwait has accorded a high priority to supporting Olympic activities both at a world level and a continental level, regardless of political and economic circumstances. In so doing, Kuwait proceeded from the conviction that the collective efforts of the international community should play an effective part in supporting the

Olympic Movement at all levels without any hesitation as such support would bespeak the high importance which should be attached to the ideals and values of the Olympic Movement.

Kuwait's young people made a point of participating, with the support of the State of Kuwait, in Olympic and sports events at a time when Kuwait was under occupation by Iraq, a State which has not understood the aspirations of the world's peoples after peaceful coexistence. The participation of the young people of Kuwait in such events was meant to send a message to the entire world that reaffirmed their rejection of injustice and political backwardness and reiterated the call for a peaceful life — a life of dignity in which the ideals of morality would be a tangible reality, not just mere words for propaganda consumption.

The continent of Asia has honoured Kuwait by giving it the Chairmanship of the Asian Olympic Council since its inception. Kuwait also hosts the headquarters of the Council. This means that Kuwait shoulders greater responsibilities in this area. We, therefore, reaffirm, from this rostrum, that Kuwait supports this Asian Olympic edifice that aims at strengthening the ideals of peace and brotherhood which the Asian peoples strive for, and rejects all divisiveness, bigotry, violence and extremism.

Kuwait, which has a principal seat on the International Olympic Committee, reaffirms its support for any project that would be adopted by the United Nations to consolidate the efforts aimed at strengthening the foundations of the new world order. In this regard, we thank our friends, the President and members of the Olympic Committee, for their praiseworthy efforts to promote the Olympic Movement in order to translate into reality the aspirations of the world's youth.

We believe that States should focus on developing those aspects of culture and knowledge that relate to Olympic ideals, either through direct inculcation at various levels of education and practical application in the various areas of sport, or through the use of the media in raising the general level of awareness regarding this subject. We are convinced that there is an urgent need to activate this vital area of youth activities by formulating a comprehensive plan with well-defined objectives that would make it possible to achieve the desired results even if continuous efforts are needed to review and reassess performance and reformulate the plan in such a way that the objectives may be achieved ultimately.

While reaffirming what I have just said, I also wish to draw attention to the need to take greater interest in programmes for the development of sports for the disabled. Such programmes have become a sign of civilized behaviour in those States that strive to integrate the disabled into all aspects of life. Such States view the disabled as a vital human resource whose productive capacities must be put to good use.

The States of the world are also called upon to take effective action to deal with drug abuse and practices that destroy the natural environment. The consequences of dealing permissively with such phenomena will be disastrous and will threaten the future of sports and the principles of the Olympic Movement.

We wish the Assembly complete success and thank the United Nations Secretariat deeply for the outstanding quality of the documents prepared for this meeting. Our best wishes go also to the United States, the friendly country that will be hosting the 1996 Olympics Games in Atlanta.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Nigeria, Ms. C. O. Aivboraye.

Ms. Aivboraye (Nigeria): Permit me, first of all, on behalf of the Nigerian delegation, to express heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Israel on the tragic loss of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. May his soul rest in peace.

The idea of the inclusion of this item, "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal", on the agenda of the General Assembly at this session emanated from resolution 49/29 of 7 December 1994. Earlier, in resolution, 48/11 of 25 October 1993, this body had called for all hostilities to cease during the Winter and Summer Olympic Games so as to enable the youth of the world to participate in the Games without hindrance. It is in this context that the Nigerian delegation endorses the holding of this meeting of the General Assembly and welcomes the statement of the President of the International Olympic Committee.

Sports are an instrument for promoting understanding between peoples and strengthening harmonious relationships between sportsmen and enthusiasts, in furtherance of the principles and objectives of the United Nations. The Olympic Ideal promotes international understanding, particularly among the youth of the world, through sports and culture. This is why my

country attaches great importance to the development of sports and has continued to provide incentives for our youth to participate in international sports competitions.

Similarly, we played a constructive role in the formulation of resolution CM/Res.28(LXII) and its adoption by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at its sixty-second ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa last June. Also endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Governments of the OAU, that resolution, *inter alia*, supports the appeal for the international community to observe an Olympic Truce, to coincide with the next Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia. We share the conviction that such a Truce will permit wider participation in those Games.

We are convinced that the support of the international community for the efforts of the International Olympic Committee geared to the promotion of international understanding and equality between nations will be invaluable for the success of the Games. We welcome the Committee's joint endeavours with the United Nations system in drawing attention in recent meetings to the relationship between sports and drugs, sports and environment and sports and health.

As we prepare for the XXVI Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, next year, we believe that an Olympic Truce will be the most positive sign of that support. We therefore call for a reaffirmation of the Olympic Truce and its faithful observance by Member States, well ahead of the opening of the Games and thereafter.

It is in this spirit that my delegation is pleased to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/50/L.15.

The Acting President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Hungary, Mr. István Náthon.

Mr. Náthon (Hungary): It was on 16 June 1894, in Paris, that Baron Pierre de Coubertin introduced the idea of renewing the ancient Olympic Games. Hungary, along with 12 other countries, was present at that meeting and was one of the nine that immediately committed themselves to that initiative. Now, more than 100 years later, we again commit ourselves, with the same determination, to peace, the Olympic Ideal and the Olympic Truce.

Hungary became a sponsor of the draft resolution on the Olympic Ideal this year. We attach great importance to the General Assembly's discussion of the agenda item "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal". We strongly believe that at present humankind needs that peaceful and better world — unfortunately, not for the first time since 1896.

The cruel assassination of Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel, reminds us again how difficult and long is the road leading towards a peaceful and better world. To realize the dream of reaching such a world, we certainly need peace between and within nations. From this rostrum, I would like to offer my sincere condolences to the family of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and to the people of Israel for their loss.

Successes and defeats, winners and losers and smiles and tears have characterized the last 100 years all over the world, both inside and outside sport stadiums. One should not forget the applause and joy in the stadium in Athens 100 years ago, hailing the first winners of the modern Olympic Games. One should also remember the applause in the stadium in Sarajevo in 1984, when that city hosted the Winter Olympic Games. But one should also remember that only a few years later the same stadium in Sarajevo became a concentration camp and then a cemetery for the victims of a cruel war.

We, the States Members of the United Nations, can and should act together to prevent such tragedies from occurring again, anywhere. This is imperative, dictated by the Olympic Ideal and by our conscience as well.

In 1894, in Paris, Hungarians applauded Baron Pierre de Coubertin when he proposed the renewal of the ancient Olympic Games. Hungarian sportsmen participated in the first Olympic Games held in Athens and won two gold medals. Since then, during this first 100 years, Hungarian sportsmen have won 134 Olympic gold medals. We would like to express our hope that the next 100 years will bring us another 134 gold medals.

Only 256 days separate us from the opening of the centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta. The dream of the best sportsmen, coaches and sports managers all over the world is to win some gold medals in Atlanta. This is also true for Hungary.

The interrelationship between sport and peace is well known. This has also been shown by our discussion today. The participation of Ministers of Youth and Sport in the consideration of this item today is a clear message that sport, the Olympic Ideal and peace are really inseparable. The importance of our work is confirmed by

the presence of the President of the International Olympic Committee, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch.

We salute the increasing number of joint endeavours of the International Olympic Committee and the United Nations system. Hungary also recognizes and appreciates the importance of cooperation between the Olympic Movement and the world of diplomacy. We believe that this relationship cannot be proved more convincingly on our side than by the fact that the President of the Hungarian Olympic Committee and Vice-President of the International Olympic Committee, a former world fencing champion, is at the same time our Ambassador to Spain.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Ukraine, Mr. Borys Hudyma.

Mr. Hudyma (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): The delegation of Ukraine was unable to speak here yesterday, and we would therefore like today to convey our sincere condolences to the Government and people of Israel on the death of the Prime Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin. We would also like to express our firm conviction that the continuation of the peace process in the Near East will be the best tribute to the glorious memory of Mr. Rabin, and a challenge to the forces standing in the way of a peaceful settlement.

The delegation of Ukraine considers that the item before us today, namely "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal", is both important and timely. All of us today are still greatly under the effect of the recent event of enormous historical significance, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The United Nations rose from the ashes of the Second World War, the most destructive war in the history of mankind, and was called upon to save succeeding generations from all the horrors of war. Unfortunately today, in spite of all the efforts of the United Nations and the tragic lessons of past wars, the world stands witness to the fact that alongside successful moves towards a settlement of the protracted conflicts of recent years, new hot-beds of tension continue to arise in various regions of the world.

It is well known that one of the most effective ways to secure peace among conflicting parties since ancient times has been through sport, the Olympic Games, because friendship among rivals has always and unfailingly been he outcome of any sporting event.

The tradition of *ekecheria*, the Olympic Truce, which was born in Greece many centuries ago, is still timely today and impels nations to tolerance, cooperation, rewarding competition in sport and work. Sport is a universal means for overcoming economic, social and individual problems. It provides a real opportunity to come to know oneself and acquire human individuality. Sport helps to give us a better feel for the world around us and to look at it through the eyes of a healthy human being.

We in Ukraine realize that sport and the Olympic Ideal must be inculcated in young people at the earliest age and we are exerting every effort to that end. Today, Ukraine has many sports schools for young people and children, physical education and Olympic training institutes, and advanced sports training schools. More than 600,000 people are involved with these physical culture and sport establishments alone.

Since Ukraine proclaimed its independence, a National Olympic Committee has been set up, along with 104 federations for new types of sport which have been recognized by international organizations. Also, regular teams in 43 kinds of sport have been established, as have a research institute for physical training and sport, the Ukrainian higher institute for trainers and other sporting establishments.

Active work is being carried out in Ukraine to create a national legislative and regulatory basis for sporting activities. Thus, in December 1993, an act on physical training and sport in Ukraine came into force, and in June 1994 a presidential decree on State support for the development of arts and sport in Ukraine was issued.

In recent years, Ukrainian sportsmen have notched up a series of major successes and brought many glorious victories to our country. The names of many Ukrainian sportsmen, Olympic, world and European champions and medal holders — Sergei Bubka in pole-vaulting; Oksana Bayul in figure-skating; Inessa Kravets for the triple jump; Dmitri Monakov for target shooting and many others — are known all over the world.

At the Winter Olympics at Lillehammer, the combined Ukrainian team, appearing for the first time as an independent team, came thirteenth out of 57 in the unofficial team ranking. This year, 1995, is the year of the eliminating rounds for the Atlanta Olympics in which Ukrainian sportsmen are also preparing to compete; they

are now engaged in the sports struggle to win selection for these jubilee games.

Today, Ukraine is in a complex economic situation as a result of the problems arising from the transition from a command-type administration of the economy to a market economy. Despite the grave difficulties our country is experiencing at this stage, the Government of Ukraine is finding the necessary strength and resources for such an important aspect of young people's upbringing as sport and physical training.

We see the facts and figures I have just given you as Ukraine's worthy contribution to the Year of Tolerance and wish to express our hope that the Olympic Ideal, common sense and mutual respect, and in the final analysis, lasting peace, health and well-being will prevail over the senseless choice of hostility, crime, harmful practices and hopelessness.

Ukraine became a cosponsor of the draft resolution entitled "The Olympic Ideal" because we consider that all its provisions tally completely with the interests of our country and lay solid foundations for further consolidating international peace and security in the spirit of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the aims of the Olympic Movement. At the same time, we believe that questions involving young people and sport must be more fully reflected in United Nations documents in the future, in the context of the development of sport and physical education. The comprehensive development of cooperation between the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee requires all-out support.

From this rostrum, allow me to repeat what the Secretary-General of the United Nations said in the International Year of Sport and the Olympic Ideal. We believe that his words convey the profound meaning of the organic unity that governs the mutual development of sport and peace:

> "The Olympic Ideal is a hymn to tolerance and understanding between people and cultures. It is an invitation to competition, but competition with respect for others. In its way, Olympism is a school for democracy. In other words, there is a natural link between the ethic of the Olympic Games and the fundamental principles of the United Nations."

In conclusion, I would like to call on Member States of the United Nations to do their utmost so that, on the eve of the hundredth anniversary of the revival of the Olympic Games, we can achieve, to the maximum extent, the realization of the Olympic Ideal, in the interests of peace, security and the harmonious development of humanity.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. H. A. H. Al-Ni'mah, Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations.

Mr. Al-Ni'mah (Qatar) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I am pleased to address this august Assembly during its consideration of agenda item 40, "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal".

I do not believe I would be mistaken in saying that the Assembly discusses this item at this session in response to the needs of humanity in the time of detente and openness we now witness. I do not believe I would be mistaken either in saying that such discussion will inspire young people who excel in sport and make it possible to devise the best means of developing the objectives of the Olympic Movement and afford the United Nations an opportunity to lay down those necessary foundations and to study those concepts that would make it possible to formulate sports programmes which serve the cause of peace, security and stability in the world.

The objectives of the Olympic Movement with all its activities are organically linked to the objectives of the United Nations. There is therefore a need to consolidate relations between the International Olympic Committee and this Organization in order to achieve the common objectives called for by the United Nations Charter and the Olympic Charter alike. This can be achieved only by focusing on devising the necessary means and formulating the programmes needed to educate the youth of the world in the virtues of peace and the values of tolerance. In addition, the youth of the world, while building their physical strength, must be imbued with the Olympic spirit of cooperation and understanding and the renunciation of discrimination and unhealthy rivalry. This, in turn, will lead to the achievement of the desired cooperation in sports relations between Member States and orient those relations towards the better and the truly perfect within the context of honest sports competitiveness upon which the Olympic Movement is based.

This would strengthen the objectives of the United Nations system and ensure the equality of rights between nations. In those rights, the promotion of sport and the Olympic spirit constitutes a vital component that makes

it possible to achieve the lofty human objectives of both Organizations.

Proceeding from this, the State of Qatar, under the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamd Al Thani, has participated in all international efforts aimed at the establishment of a prosperous international community in which youth enjoy the lofty values of sport and the Olympic spirit.

Qatar has also taken a keen interest in keeping up with developments in the field of sports and thus created a sports infrastructure that allows its generations to enjoy sport and gives them assistance in their development efforts and in their creative efforts to build a better future based on social development and the promotion of fruitful, human creativity.

In order to achieve such objectives and to realize the values of the Olympic Movement so as to respond to the needs of the youth in my country, Qatar continues to build sports facilities according to Olympic specifications. This enabled it to host the World Cup for Youth (FIFA) and the 1994 Soccer Finals for Asia in the World Cup. It also enabled Qatar to make great achievements in its track and field teams. Our delegations have participated in many international games and Qatar hopes to host Olympic competitions.

The State of Qatar continues to build youth hostels in various cities in order to achieve the lofty Olympic goals.

The international authority for youth and sport in Qatar continues to make various efforts to develop cooperation between our youth and the youth of the rest of the world in order to revive the Olympic values which call for the establishment of links of friendship, cooperation and solidarity amongst peoples. We believe that the promotion of such values is a means for the establishment of a better future for mankind in a new world where peoples have more confidence in their own identity and their cultural specificity and in which they continue their human march, inspired by the Olympic ideal, which expresses the convergence of all human wills in order to continue the mutual relations of understanding and cooperation and in which the healthy competitiveness of sport would contribute to the building of a world of values, a world of love, a world of friendship, a world that embraces the hopes of mankind in the best possible manner and that expresses the desired human future which will be better, more beautiful and bright.

For all these reasons, the State of Qatar has joined in sponsoring the draft resolution before the Assembly and hopes that you will support it.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

Before we take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that the following countries have become cosponsors of draft resolution A/50/L.15: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Czech Republic, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Kazakstan, Kuwait, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Zimbabwe.

With these additional cosponsors we have achieved a record number of cosponsors — to date 161.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/50/L.15.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt this draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/50/L.15 was adopted (resolution 50/13).

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Italy.

Mr. Busacca (Italy): As announced by the Permanent Representative of Italy at yesterday's meeting, the delegation of Italy wishes to be a cosponsor of the draft resolution just adopted.

The Acting President: That request has been noted.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 40?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President in the Chair.

The President: I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/INF/50/5/Add.2, which contains a tentative programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings for the rest of November and the month of December. The addendum supersedes document A/INF/50/5/Add.1 and announcements I have made since the issuance of that addendum.

The schedule is being issued to assist delegations in planning their work. For its part, the Secretariat will endeavour to ensure that the relevant documentation will be available to delegations in advance of the discussion of any given agenda item.

The list of speakers for each of the items listed in document A/INF/50/5/Add.2 is now open. I should like to point out that there are still a few agenda items for which no date has been indicated. I will announce the dates for the consideration of those items in due course and sufficiently in advance. I will also keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes.

As I mentioned to the Assembly in my earlier announcements, I hope to keep close to the schedule so that the Assembly can discharge its responsibilities as effectively and expeditiously as possible. I again appeal to those representatives submitting draft resolutions to do so sufficiently in advance of the dates fixed for consideration of items in order to give members adequate time to examine them.

I should like to reiterate that additional time is needed for draft resolutions involving changes in the programme of work or additional expenditures, since these will require the preparation of a statement of programme budget implications by the Secretary-General.

Furthermore, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee will need adequate time to review the programme budget implications of a draft resolution before the latter can be acted on by the Assembly.

While on the subject of draft resolutions, I should like to remind members that, in view of the number of draft resolutions expected under agenda item 20, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", and the possible need to hold consultations on them with a view to reaching consensus, the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under agenda item 20 will be Friday, 10 November 1995.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.